

BABY-SITTING

Molding Playdough with two small children [at/ is/ of] no way for a thirteen-year-[lap/ fine/ old] to spend his Friday night, but [are/ and/ the] going rate for baby-sitting is [pat/ two/ wet] dollars an hour, and I really [want/ blue/ toad] a new telescope.

"Joey is mixing [key/ the/ hot] blue with my red again!" screamed Sarah. [She/ Then/ And] is five and very bossy.

"Purple," whispered Joey. [Even/ Your/ Read] though he's three, he hardly talks. [Paper/ When/ Joint] he does talk, he usually only [tally/ open/ says] one or two words.

"Let's quit [this/ soda/ pill] stupid game and eat our dessert," demanded Sarah.

"[We/ Met/ Of] have to clean up all this [run/ mess/ groan] first."

"You clean it up. I [quit/ wind/ your] so I don't have to clean [at/ of/ up]. That's the rule in our house."

"Sarah, children [the/ and/ who] don't clean up must go to [rose/ bed/ fat] early without any dessert," I said, [horse/ bought/ trying] to sound authoritative.

She glared at [cot/ top/ me] out of the corner of her [get/ eye/ yes] the whole time she was stuffing [top/ the/ bite] Playdough into the tiny tubs. I [nap/ hit/ was] just relieved she didn't tantrum. By [the/ and/ map] time we

had put all of [bet/ come/ the] Playdough away and wiped the table, Sarah [you/ up/ had] forgotten that she was angry with [at/ me/ of].

"Can we have popsicles for dessert, Michael?" [too/ are/ she] asked. I hate it when they [wand/ eat/ just] popsicles. They let the popsicles melt [dog/ are/ all] over the place. It's almost like [they/ came/ bird] think the more it melts, the [west/ more/ have] delicious it tastes.

"Why don't we [try/ coat/ sat] one of the yummy brownies from [the/ and/ are] bakery?" I said. For one thing, brownies [if/ are/ goat] cleaner. More important, brownies are what [I/ a/ of] wanted for dessert.

"How about it, Joey? [Want/ Said/ Load] a brownie for dessert?" I asked.

"Waffles," [heart/ fish/ said] Joey. He gets his point across.

"[Fun/ See/ It's] too late to make waffles, Joey," Sarah snapped. "[Up/ I/ Be] know! Let's have a brownie with [time/ ice/ boat] cream on top!"

For once, I actually [liked/ apple/ toast] one of Sarah's ideas. Maybe she's [not/ vet/ nap] so bad after all.

After we finished [jests/ gather/ eating] brownies a la mode, it was [lane/ time/ but] for bed. I always read them [it/ a/ of] story at bedtime, and Sarah always [picks/ lemon/ match] the longest book she can find [top/ so/ rip] that she can stay up later.

"[Gum/ Came/ Look], Sarah," I began, "it is already 8:30, [and/ the/ ant] you were supposed to be asleep [if/ of/ at] 8:00. It's either a short story

[it/ or/ as] no story at all." Lucky for [wet/ me/ to] she can't tell time yet.

The Websters [float/ shout/ didn't] get home until almost midnight, and [I/ a/ of] had fallen asleep.

"Did they give [ate/ you/ went] any trouble?" Mrs. Webster asked as [she/ cat/ dine] got some money out of her [hopes/ night/ purse].

"Not a bit," I found myself answering, [five/ free/ even] if it wasn't the whole truth.

[Of/ Got/ As] I walked across the street toward [my/ son/ of] house, I gazed at the stars, knowing that [the/ good/ too] ten dollars in my pocket would [ghost/ house/ bring] them that much closer to me.